REMARKS

This is a divisional application of Application No. 09/379,731, filed August 24, 1999 ("the '731 Application). Claims 1-35 have been cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and Claims 36-41 have been added. Claim 36 is in independent form.

Applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration and early passage to issue of the present divisional application.

CLAIM TO PRIORITY

Applicant claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 based upon Japanese Applications Nos. 10-257623 and 11-231475, filed August 28, 1998, and August 18, 1999, respectively, and respectfully requests acknowledgment of this claim and of receipt of the certified copy of the priority documents, which were filed on October 21, 1999, in the '731 Application.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.56, Applicant respectfully directs the Examiner's attention to the documents listed on the enclosed PTO-1449 form.

The information listed on the enclosed PTO-1449 form, with the exception of U.S. Patent No. 6,263,497B1, was cited in the '731 Application. The Examiner is respectfully directed to the files of the United States Patent and Trademark Office for review of those documents. (See 37 C.F.R. § 1.98(d) and MPEP § 609). Also in

accordance with the current practice of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, a copy of U.S. Patent No. 6,263,497B1, is not enclosed.

The Examiner is requested to indicate that the listed information has been considered by initially the appropriate portions of the enclosed PTO-1449 form and returning a copy of same to Applicant's attorneys of record.

CONCLUSION

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Attorney for Applicant

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